SUPPORTING CLASS STRUGGLE PRISONERS

We live in a society where a tiny minority own the wealth, the land, run the big companies and live in luxury on the backs of working people who produce everything. They try to control our lives and keep us in line by every means possible - schools, the media, the DSS, drugs, Disneyland. If we obey orders, work hard, don't answer back, we can live a reasonable life - until the next recession. We can help our bosses keep others down, like the police or baliffs do and get our rewards: power, wealth, security.

But for those of us not willing to work to keep our rulers in luxury, or those who try to take back any of the wealth that we have made, there is the justice system. Strike for a decent wage, steal to stay alive, resist the control and abuse in our lives, or break the bosses laws in any way and we face police, courts and prison.

Prison is the bottom line in control - their ultimate weapon. Prison means isolation, bloody punishments, divided families. It drives people to despair and suicide. The whole system is designed to split us up and isolate people who could set an example to the rest of our class. Likewise, if we step outside so-called "normal" behaviour, such as women who refuse to accept the feminine role of wife and

mother, anyone whose sexuality is so-called "deviant", we may be stigmatised, tranquilised and ultimately imprisoned.

On the outside, fear of prison is built up to stop us from fighting back against the injustice in our lives and myths are created about prisoners to divide us from them. Most people are inside for trying to survive. In Britain 94% of recorded crimes are against property. About one third are inside for non-payment of fines or taxes. Thousands are on remand. Many others are guilty of nothing more than being working class, Irish, black, framed by the police (such as the Tottenham 3 or Birmingham 6) - this gives the impression that the police are "cracking crime" and to remind us who is in control.

Most prisoners are working class people, just like the rest of us. They are not all the mad beasts the tory papers would have us believe. The press hype up stories of "violent crime" to give the existence of prison some justification and to divide us from prisoners. But the fact is that only a tiny percentage of crimes are violent or anti-social. It is also true that such crime is not prevented by prisons. The system we live in encourages competition, power relationships and self-interest. This system is also anti-social; while it remains intact there will always be violence. Calling the shoplifter, the person on the picket line and the rapist all 'criminals' as if there were no difference between them, uses most people's horror of anti-social violence against the vast majority whose offences are to do with property and resistance.

It should be up to us, in our communities, to deal with anti-social elements in our own ways; we don't need THEIR so called justice system to control us in the name of fighting crime.

You'll rarely see the bosses in court - no matter how many laws they might break or deaths they might cause. The rules are there for their protection. Even if they do end up in court, like the Guiness bosses, they can swindle millions and get suspended sentences or let out of prison after a few days. **WE GET 25 YEARS.**

THE REAL CRIMINALS ARE THE RICH WHO RUN THE SYSTEM AT OUR EXPENSE

FIGHTING BACK

Just as the class war goes on in our daily lives, in carries on inside prisons too. Many prisoners resist the prison system - in their own cases, individually, or hundreds together as at Strangeways and throughout prisons in April 1990; fighting back with joy and rage to tear down the walls that surround them. Their battles inspire ours and ours theirs - it's no coincidence that the Strangeways Uprising followed a day after the Poll Tax Riot in Trafalgar Square; a banner on the roof read "No Poll Tax Here".

WE'RE OUT HERE FOR THEM

At any time, any working class person can end up inside. We must support prisoners in their day-to-day fight for better conditions just as we support strikes and all forms of ongoing struggle. But we know you can't reform capitalism out of existence: we need a social revolution that will tear down the prisons along with the rest of the framework of repression. We can control our own lives.

THE ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS

The Anarchist Black Cross aims at practical solidarity with prisoners. We support anarchist and revolutionary prisoners and those incarcerated for their political actions or beliefs. We support people framed up by the police. We support prisoners organising and resisting on the inside. We welcome contact from prisoners, their relatives and anyone interested in getting involved in our work. We actively support people with letters, contact, material aid, pickets and publicity. Ultimately we work for a class-based movement that will destroy prisons along with capitalism, in a revolution to create a real classless society. People working together without exploitation, hatred or terror, for a world community based on co-operation.

Birmingham ABC, c/o Box 3, 190 Alum Rock Road, Saltley, Birmingham B8.
Bolton ABC, PO Box 47, Bolton BL2 1QA.
Bradford ABC, c/o 1 in 12 Club, 31 Manor Row, Bradford BD1.
Essex ABC, c/o Neil, Dept N, PO Box 1327, Bishop's Stortford, Herts.
Leamington Spa ABC, Box 1, 22 High St, Leamington Spa CV31.
Leeds ABC, Box JAG, 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS1.
London ABC, c/o 121 Bookshop, 121 Railton Road, London SE24.
Manchester ABC, Box 8, 1 Newton St, Manchester M1.
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Oxford ABC, Box ZZ, 34 Cowley Rd, Oxford.
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Sheffield ABC, Black Star, PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY.
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